(b) to (e) As per the existing guidelines, the funds under the scheme IDDP are directly released to the State Dairy Federation/District Milk Union including Regional Milk Unions. Funds under the Scheme 'Strengthening Infrastructure for Quality and Clean Milk Production' are released through State Government' to District Milk Union/State Milk Federation/Regional Milk Union for project implementation.

Under the scheme "Assistance to Co-operatives", funds are released to District Milk Union/ State Co-operative Milk Federation through NDDB, for rehabilitation of sick Co-operative Milk Unions, which also includes / Regional Milk Unions.

No proposal is presently, under consideration of Central Government to change the existing guideline of the schemes.

Essential drugs under price control

3415. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to bring 354 essential drugs under price control;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The Supreme Court *vide* its interim order dated 10-3-2003 in SLP (c) No. 3668/2003 directed the Government, *inter-alia*, to "consider and formulate appropriate criteria for ensuring essential and life saving drugs not to fall out of price control and further directed to review drugs which are essential and life saving in nature till 2nd May, 2003". As per the directions of the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reviewed the National Essential Drugs List 1996 and brought out the National List of Essential Medicines 2003 (NLEM 2003).

Keeping in view the directions of the Supreme Court it has been proposed in the draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy-2006 that basket of drugs for price control would be the formulations of specified strength of essential medicines as contained in the NLEM 2003 (subject to certain exemptions) in addition to the 74 bulk drugs and formulations thereof which are at present under price control under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 and the formulations based thereon.

This Policy was submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11-1-2007. It was decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GoM). GoM has since been constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Sharad Pawar, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, GoM has held three meetings so far on 10-4-2007, 12-9-2007 and 30-1-2008. GoM is yet to make its recommendations to the Cabinet.